



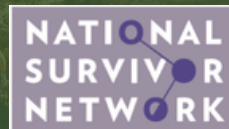
BUILDING BRIDGES FOR
SURVIVOR PARTNERSHIPS

September 2025

REFLECTIONS: LEARNING, UNLEARNING AND CALLING IN

PREPARED BY
ICF

THE NATIONAL SURVIVOR NETWORK
SURVIVOR ALLIANCE



ICF supports this publication under 15POVC-22-GK-03284-HT, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this Newsletter are the contributors' and do not necessarily represent the U.S. Department of Justice's official position or policies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

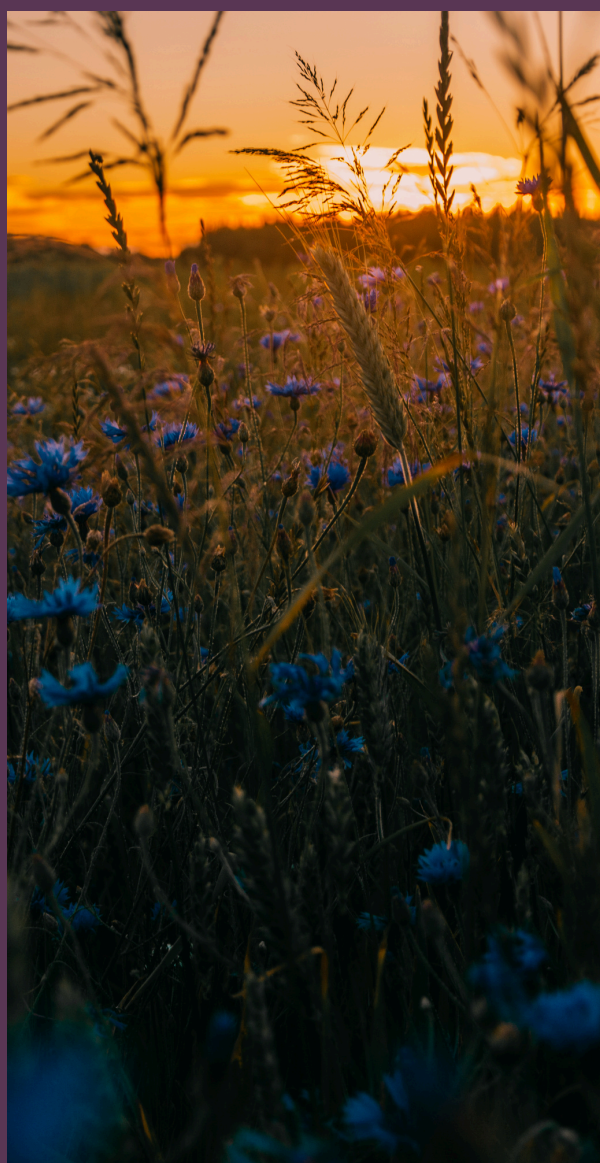
Introduction	03
Mission and Vision	04
Calling In	05
Unlearning & Learning	06
ICF Reflection	09
The National Survivor Network (NSN) Reflection	10
Survivor Alliance Reflection	14
SETTA Consultant Reflections	15
Closing	27
Acknowledgements	28
APPENDIX	
Resources for Survivor Engagement	29
Case Examples	32

INTRODUCTION

These reflections are prepared as part of our final report to summarize the outcomes, and lessons learned from the Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance (SETTA) project—a survivor-defined initiative developed through partnership between the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), ICF, Survivor Alliance (SA), and the National Survivor Network (NSN).

SETTA was created to strengthen and expand meaningful survivor engagement (SE) across OVC-funded anti-trafficking programs. Over the course of the project, SETTA supported grantees in building survivor-informed practices, facilitated peer learning, and elevated the voices and leadership of survivors with lived experience of trafficking.

This report captures the reflections, testimonies, case studies, and insights shared by SETTA partners, consultants, and grantees nationwide. These contributions illustrate the transformative impact of survivor-led approaches and highlight the importance of continuous learning and unlearning in the anti-trafficking field.



MISSION AND VISION



VISION

SETTA enhances the engagement between service providers and those with lived experience by challenging the prevailing status quo, working with OVC human trafficking grantees to neutralize power dynamics, rethinking survivor leadership, providing a platform for unlearning, and repairing partnerships with individuals with lived experience.

MISSION

SETTA's mission is to bridge the engagement between lived experience experts with OVC human trafficking grantees through fostering an environment of collaboration, humility, and growth. We enhance peer-to-peer support by promoting trauma-informed, evidence-based practices among professionals in the anti-trafficking field and creating impactful partnerships.



As SETTA project staff, we are excited to share reflections on our first 3 years as an OVC-funded training and technical assistance provider—a period marked by profound learning, unlearning, and a deep commitment to increasing meaningful survivor engagement for grantees. This survivor-defined partnership between ICF, SA, and NSN was established with the crucial understanding that survivors of trafficking are essential leaders, partners, and creators in the anti-trafficking movement. Their collective wisdom, perspectives, and leadership are crucial to informing and improving prevention, intervention, policy efforts, and support provided to fellow survivors.

Throughout this journey, we have embraced the concept of "calling in" to engage in important, honest, and impactful conversations that serve as catalysts for change. By normalizing conflict and building communication skills, we have strengthened our understanding by deepening our perspectives. Lived experience expertise provided critical insight into ineffective programs, policies, and processes. This process can be uncomfortable, but by decentering ourselves and "calling in," we both work toward a common goal.

We recognize the complex and often challenging landscape of survivor engagement. Nationwide, access to resources and tools for lived experience experts to meaningfully participate in anti-trafficking work remains varied, limited, and sometimes inaccessible. Survivors often navigate a complex web of networks, personal drive, and dedication to enter this vital field. Whether through direct care, academia, peer support, grassroots organizing, or advocacy, each survivor's path to becoming a lived experience expert and integrating their vital insights into anti-trafficking work is unique.

A common thread unites many survivors on this project—having to witness individuals with similar lived experiences lack the ability to access federally funded anti-trafficking programs. One of our SETTA survivor staff poignantly shared:

"I watched people being turned away from services for being 'too dangerous, too unstable or acute, too loud, a safety risk, or not ready to engage,' and thinking...that was me—I was all those things. So now, I am working in an anti-trafficking program that I would have never been able to get help from."

This powerful reflection highlights the moral injury that can occur when lived experience is not truly valued and integrated. SETTA was launched in 2022 and was built upon OVC's increased recognition of the importance of lived experience, following its first formal consultation with survivors 10 years prior through the Faces of Human Trafficking series.

The SETTA project has since dedicated hundreds of hours of survivor-informed training and technical assistance (TTA) to OVC-funded grantees. To date, 18 lived experience consultants have been actively involved in SETTA projects, working directly with grantees. While the SETTA project was limited in the number of individual TTAs we could provide, the interest of survivor consultants in being part of this work was profound, with 81 survivor consultants from 31 U.S. states expressing interest in providing TTA to OVC grantees. The collective effort of the assigned project staff, comprising 6 individuals across ICF, NSN, and SA, has been fueled by a shared commitment to elevate the voices of survivors. Since the project's inception, NSN and SA have dedicated 1,130 hours to providing peer support, including consultant support, training, and professional development.

LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

Initially, widespread belief was that organizations struggle to engage lived experience experts due to a lack of experience and difficulty in accessing this expertise. However, our journey with SETTA over the past 3 years has revealed a deeper reality. We've learned that the challenges often stem from complex interpersonal relationships and deeply held beliefs. Fear was a common barrier, expressed as, "I don't know how to talk to people with lived experience," from professionals, and "they stop knowing how to treat me once they know I have lived experience," from consultants. SETTA has become a vital space for lived experience experts and field professionals to name these fears, recognize their impact, and move forward with a shared understanding. Together, we've embarked on a process of unlearning ingrained practices and mindsets that hinder meaningful survivor engagement.

UNLEARNING

Assumptions: We began this work with preconceived notions about why grantees might face difficulties in engaging with survivors. To foster open and honest conversations about the underlying issues, we had to consciously challenge and unlearn existing beliefs and assumptions. This involved actively listening to the experiences and perspectives of both grantees and consultants without the filter of our initial assumptions.

Survivor Engagement as Auxiliary: SETTA played a pivotal role in helping grantees understand that survivor engagement is not merely auxiliary but is the most crucial aspect of anti-trafficking efforts. Through comprehensive training sessions and open dialogues, SETTA emphasized that survivors' voices and experiences are central to shaping effective policies and interventions. By highlighting the importance of empathy, respect, and active listening, SETTA ensured that grantees recognized the invaluable insights survivors bring. This approach deepened appreciation for survivor-led initiatives, reinforcing the idea that true progress in addressing trafficking can only be achieved when survivors are at the forefront, leading the conversation and decision-making processes.

What Outcomes Could Look Like for Our Project: We began with certain preconceived notions of what successful outcomes for SETTA should look like. However, through our direct engagement with grantees and consultants, we embraced a more flexible and adaptive understanding of success. This allowed us to recognize and celebrate a wider spectrum of achievements, including personal growth among individuals, the strengthening of collaborative partnerships, and incremental yet significant progress towards long-term goals.

Scarcity Mindsets: We previously were inclined to believe that resources, opportunities, and recognition were inherently limited. By consciously unlearning this scarcity mindset together, we actively embraced collaboration, shared success, and mutual support among our team, consultants, and grantees. This fostered a more open and generous environment conducive to collective growth—one that began to undo the narrative that access to lived experience expertise is limited.

Who Benefits From Trauma Informed Care: A key theme in many of our TTAs was expanding the understanding of trauma. By emphasizing that trauma is not solely a survivor's experience but a universal experience, particularly within victim services, we fully recognized the inherent value of trauma-informed practices for all individuals. This broader perspective highlights that trauma-informed practices, while crucial for supporting survivors, create a more supportive environment for everyone.

LEARNING

To Keeping It Simple: Simplifying our technical assistance (TA) approaches and communications helps make the support more tangible and effective. Overcomplicating processes can create barriers and confusion. Our project, grantees, and consultants were consistently challenged to keep the TA incremental to build sustainability.

To Examine the Foundation: Grounding our efforts in foundational work ensures that the support we provide is built on solid principles and practices. This involves understanding the project's core values and goals and aligning actions accordingly.

"What was really most valuable was the conversation that we were having and the perspectives that were being cultivated. It went to a larger purpose for me than what I came into it thinking" - SETTA Participant



To Prioritize Relationship: Trust and rapport are essential to the deeply challenging learning and unlearning processes that grantees face. Establishing genuine connections and showing consistent support helped us build a strong foundation for effective collaboration.

To Normalize and Appreciate Conflict: Conflict is a natural part of any collaborative effort. Normalizing and embracing conflict enabled open discussions and effective resolutions, ultimately leading to stronger and more resilient partnerships. Our project grounded grantees in the recognition that inviting in lived experience fundamentally meant inviting critical analysis of what works and what doesn't, and hearing this can be challenging for grantees. We prioritized the needs of program grantees and acknowledged that many of us on this project have seen and been a part of the lateral violence that exists among survivors who have had to fight to be in these spaces and navigate having scarce resources and working in a field where they could potentially be re-traumatized.

When, if, but and why: Every TA engagement involved deciding whether to work with survivors, recognizing the value and impact of survivor voices, and ensuring their perspectives and experiences remain central to the work by intentionally building trust. This is where we asked grantees to really think about their “why”—their personal motivation and core reasons for being involved in this work—and ignite a passion and motivation that extended beyond obligation.



“Through this ongoing process of unlearning ingrained practices and mindsets, we have strived to cultivate a more supportive and effective environment for authentic survivor engagement. This journey of introspection and adaptation has been essential to our growth and paved the way for more meaningful and sustainable survivor engagement within the broader human trafficking field, for grantees and consultants” - SETTA project staff

ICF REFLECTION

Our partnership with Survivor Alliance and the National Survivor Network has been fundamental to SETTA's success. Their deep expertise and lived experience have enriched every aspect of this project. As a partner on this team, we recognized the critical importance of "walking the talk," meaning, as we teach and promote principles of slowing down, calling in, and unlearning with grantees and consultants, we consciously apply these same principles within our own ICF, NSN, and SA partnership. This required dedicated time and intentionality to deepen our relationships and navigate the inevitable power dynamics, capacity challenges, and leadership transitions within our collaborative—the same dedication and time that we supported and guided consultants and grantees in honoring them. By actively engaging in this learning process alongside our project grantees, we built stronger, more resilient partnerships.

We also gained a profound understanding of organizational trauma and the imperative for healing and change at the organizational level. Recognizing that organizations, like individuals, can experience trauma and require healing, we strived to create supportive environments for survivors, staff, and the organizations as a whole. Our own experiences with staff and leadership changes, as well as capacity barriers, mirrored the very challenges faced by grantees. This shared understanding deepened our empathy and informed our approach to TA.

The distinction between survivor-defined and survivor-led approaches became increasingly clear. We actively supported our partners in defining these approaches, where survivors set the agenda and lead the efforts. We learned that our own organizational partnership benefited immensely from embracing these principles and working together toward common goals. As SETTA staff, we weren't just managing a project; we were actively defining what survivor-driven TTA work truly means and where we are collectively heading.

"We were always aware of the themes that impacted our work as a project, [which] were the same ones that grantees faced—communication, capacity, and the sheer lift of the work—weighted even more by its vital importance." – ICF SETTA staff



THE NATIONAL SURVIVOR NETWORK REFLECTION

The National Survivor Network (NSN) is a values-based, survivor-led professional membership community for survivors of trafficking who are engaged in or preparing for leadership in the many movements to end violence, whether as professionals, activists, or community organizers.

NSN's mission is to develop, equip, and empower a community of survivors of trafficking engaging in advocacy, education, peer-to-peer mentorship, prevention, and policy work using a public health framework and human rights approach.

Our approach to ending and addressing human trafficking centers on protecting survivors' human rights—rights that were violated through their trafficking experience and are outlined in the 2000 United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. Human rights considerations include recognition of the undeniable right to self-determination, safety, housing, education, and employment, as well as economic, social, political, medical, behavioral, and spiritual well-being. We cannot repair the harm of trafficking and empower survivors' leadership without prioritizing these concerns.

NSN has been a key partner in the Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance (SETTA) project since its early inception. One of NSN's major contributions was the Meaningful Engagement of People With Lived Experience Toolkit, co-authored by Chris Ash (then Survivor Leadership Program Manager) and Sophie Otiende (Executive Director of the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery at the time). This toolkit played a pivotal role in shaping our approach to survivor engagement within training and technical assistance, offering essential guidance and insight.

To further support this work, NSN provides a comprehensive 15-hour Meaningful Engagement Coaches training. This training program equips survivors and individuals with lived experience to leverage their expertise in collaboration with organizations and stakeholders working with survivors of trafficking and other forms of violence. The training emphasizes authentic engagement and supports organizational change that centers survivors, moving beyond tokenism to meaningful inclusion.

Our time with SETTA was transformative, both professionally and personally, for our team and consultants. One of the most profound lessons we learned is that collaboration has the power to shift harmful circumstances that may arise while doing this work, but only when we take the time to build trust and engage with care.



This project reminded us that healing and change are possible, especially when we prioritize relationships over deliverables.

At the organizational level, we recognized our capacity for growth, not just in terms of systems and structures, but in our ability to be vulnerable, listen deeply, and change course when needed. We learned that organizations, like individuals, can experience harm, trauma, and stress from working in this field. These experiences shape how we engage with survivors and people with lived experience. By acknowledging this, we began to move beyond a "them vs. us" mentality and toward collaborative relationships rooted in mutual respect and shared humanity.

At the consultant level, we saw how survivor consultants set the tone for engagement. Their leadership and presence significantly influenced our organization's interactions with them and our approach to engaging with future consultants and organizations. This was not just a powerful project to engage with survivors; it was also a space for professional development and empowerment for survivor consultants.

We learned to be okay with not having all the answers right away. Consulting often demands tangible outcomes, but SETTA taught us that relationship-building must come first. We adopted a gradual approach because we realized rushing the process could cause harm. Thoughtful, intentional design of programs and roles is essential to ensure safety and care for everyone involved.

We also confronted barriers to sustainability, recognizing how scarcity of time, resources, and emotional bandwidth impacts how organizations engage with survivors. This awareness has deepened our commitment to creating more sustainable, trauma-informed best practices and support.

Ultimately, SETTA reminded us that change is possible when we are willing to be uncomfortable, be vulnerable, and prioritize relationships. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn, grow, and move forward—alongside allies and survivors, united as equals with a shared purpose.

During our time with SETTA, we engaged in deep reflection and unlearning that reshaped how we approach survivor engagement, organizational growth, and sustainable change. One of the most significant shifts was letting go of frustration with allies and organizations, especially around assumptions of intention. We learned to move away from the belief that organizations are incapable of growth, and instead began to hold space for their evolution, even when it's slow or imperfect.

We unlearned the urgency to fix everything immediately. This allowed us to embrace the power of pacing, recognizing that hearing "no" or "not yet" is often a natural and constructive part of the process.



Survivors and consultants don't need to be likable to be valuable, and we challenged the traditional notions of what a "professional" looks like when lived experience is centered. It's not about hiring a survivor as a checkbox—it's about creating permission to slow down, build trust, and co-create frameworks that support equity and sustainability.

We also unlearned the idea that past experiences with survivors should dictate current engagement. Instead, we allowed organizations to acknowledge uncertainty and encouraged collaboration with survivors to amplify diverse voices and perspectives. We celebrated foundational steps, recognizing they were worth honoring, because they set the stage for long-term success.

Finally, we unlearned traditional power dynamics by centering agency. Survivors often carry histories shaped by systems or relationships where autonomy and decision-making were disregarded or denied. Through SETTA, we embraced the "privilege of making mistakes" and the importance of equal decision-making power because true agency is not just about being heard, but also being able to shape outcomes.

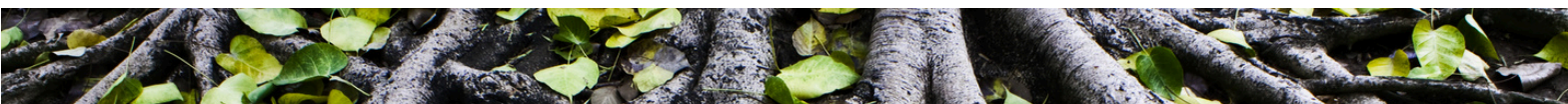
SETTA was transformative for our organization in several key ways. One of the most powerful realizations came from the NSN coordinators' reflection: "I thought there was no way that we would have an impact, but SETTA showed us that we can have [an] impact." That shift from doubt to empowerment really encapsulates the broader impact SETTA had on our team.

SETTA's support allowed our team to grow into their roles as TTA providers within their specific areas of expertise. This wasn't just about skill-building—it was about validation. The backing and structure that SETTA provided helped consultants feel seen and supported, which was invaluable.

Another major shift was in how consultants were perceived. SETTA helped move the narrative from seeing consultants as individuals with a specific story to recognizing them as professionals with specific expertise. That distinction is powerful. It changed how organizations engaged with consultants—no longer just as survivors, but as experts. This reframing fostered deeper collaboration and respect, and it's something we hadn't historically experienced in survivor engagement spaces.

Reflection: Survivor Engagement in the OVC-Funded Anti-Trafficking Field

For the field of OVC-funded anti-trafficking program grantees, survivor engagement is not just a recommended practice; it is a foundational necessity for sustainable progress. To evolve meaningfully and sustainably and ensure efforts are effective and connected, this sector must center the voices, experiences, and leadership of survivors and lived experience experts.



Survivor engagement brings authenticity, insight, and lived expertise that theory or external observation cannot replicate. Survivors understand the nuances of trafficking in ways that inform more compassionate, targeted, and impactful programming. Their involvement ensures that services are not only trauma informed but also culturally and contextually relevant.

For grantees and consultants, this means shifting from tokenistic involvement to genuine partnership. It requires investing in survivor capacity-building, compensating lived expertise fairly, and creating spaces where survivor voices shape strategy, policy, and practice. The impact of this shift is profound: It leads to more responsive services, stronger community trust, and ultimately, more successful outcomes in the fight against trafficking.

Programs like SETTA exemplify the kind of infrastructure needed to support survivor leadership. Without such initiatives, the field will continue to struggle with meaningful and sustained engagement. SETTA and similar programs offer survivors a platform to participate safely, equitably, and effectively, whether as consultants, advisors, or leaders. - NSN Staff



SURVIVOR ALLIANCE REFLECTION

Survivor Alliance's partnership with ICF and NSN on SETTA was a crucial experience of learning, development, and implementation of our consulting services. SA's mission is to unite and empower survivors of trafficking to be leaders of the anti-trafficking movement. SETTA enabled us to achieve a key goal in movement leadership—educating and training others to join our cause, while also developing strong relationships and partnerships with our allies. Our partnership with SETTA allowed members of Survivor Alliance and graduates of our leadership programs to deepen or expand their roles in the anti-trafficking field. It also positioned SA as a credible platform where our role as a nongovernmental organization and established reputation in the sector can allow survivors to access income-generating opportunities.

At the organizational level, we clarified our roles and responsibilities in working with our TTA consultants, specifically regarding our contracts, project deliverables, and professional development. While professional development is a more standardized practice for employees and part of our leadership program objectives, we sought a balance between hiring consultants for their existing skills and expertise while also providing opportunities for them to learn and grow. Supporting consultants results in higher quality TTAs. SA consultants benefited from coaching and support from survivor leaders, learning about resources that would enhance their consulting services, and discussing how to navigate challenges. We also wanted to respect consultants' unique knowledge and experiences, and allow them to operate in individualized and independent ways. For example, we were challenged with how to adapt to each consultant's different way of conducting client onboarding. If SETTA has a standard or desired process, we need to communicate that to consultants without becoming prescriptive. For SA, we had heightened awareness about the boundaries between contractor and employee, ensuring compliance with labor laws.

Participating in SETTA also taught us about how and when to step in to support grantees and clients, either alongside or without the consultant, if the consultant was facing challenges they couldn't address. These challenges may be personal, such as experiencing a bereavement, or professional, such as a mismatch in the consultant's area of expertise and grantee needs or frequent staffing changes during the project.

SA's survivor-informed and survivor-led consulting services were enhanced through partnering with SETTA. We have improved our internal processes for consultant onboarding, clarified how we want to support TTA consultants, and learned about partnership at the organizational level.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

SETTA consultants are members of Survivor Alliance and the National Survivor Network who provide TTA to OVC-funded human trafficking grantees. Without their expertise, skill, and collaboration, this project could not have been possible. In this section, SETTA consultants share their reflections on the SETTA project, highlighting the achievements, challenges, and learnings from their perspective. Not all contributors wished to have their names listed; those individuals are described as "SETTA Consultant." The following reflections are the individual opinions of the consultants.



Heather Horton

"During my TTA sessions, we had the opportunity to explore our own biases. As a group, we stepped into a vulnerable space where we acknowledged the beliefs we hold, and in doing so, we saw something important: Our perception of others is often a reflection of our internalized beliefs about ourselves."

When I think about what's needed for survivor engagement, it always comes back to a question we, as a society, have been pondering for a long time: How do we relate and connect to people whose experiences are vastly different from our own?

Before my trafficking experience, I carried bias—bias against homeless individuals, bias against addiction (even though I had grown up around it), bias against "prostitution"—and all the hidden judgment underneath that. I even had a bias against people who stayed in abusive relationships. My own ignorance once prompted the question, "Why don't they just leave?"

But life has a way of humbling us.

Looking back, I wonder: If I had better understood the circumstances that create oppression and exploitation, would I have recognized the warning signs? Would my outcome have been different? Would my healing have been easier?

Now, I understand something I didn't before: Bias is a form of privilege.

CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

Privilege exists in many forms. Sometimes, it's the privilege of never having experienced certain hardships. Other times, it's the privilege of being given the benefit of the doubt—being seen as trustworthy, competent, or worthy of protection. Privilege reinforces bias by creating an "us vs. them" narrative, one that allows us to distance ourselves from the struggles of others.

If we're truly honest, we should ask ourselves: Does assuming the worst about "them" make me feel better about myself? Had someone asked me this years ago, I might not have accepted the truth. But the answer was yes.

During my TTA sessions, we had the opportunity to explore our own biases. As a group, we stepped into a vulnerable space where we acknowledged the beliefs we hold, and in doing so, we saw something important: Our perception of others is often a reflection of our internalized beliefs about ourselves.

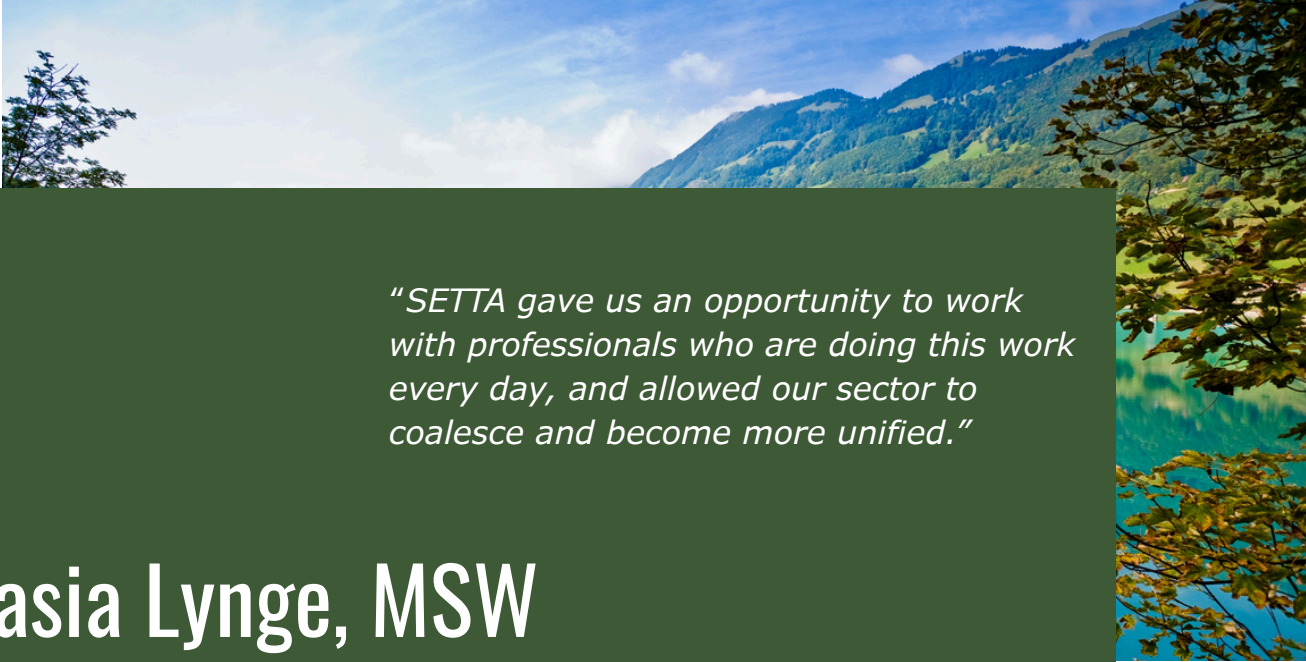
We were able to shift our perspective—to ask whether we were leading from a place of empathy and connection or a place of superiority and assumption. When you've always had safety and autonomy, it's hard to understand what it means not to have a choice. When you've always been treated with respect by law enforcement or doctors, it's easy to doubt someone who says they weren't. When you've never had your life choices questioned or faced judgment and skepticism, you may assume you simply make better choices than survivors.

But here's the truth: Bias gives us a false sense of security. It's a shield that protects us from acknowledging just how fragile circumstances can be. And in doing so, it allows us to perpetuate the very treatment we claim to stand against unconsciously. So when we ask, "What is needed to increase survivor engagement?"—we need to start with an honest reflection—within ourselves, within our teams, and within the policies and structures we uphold. We need to examine who we see as "qualified" to lead in anti-trafficking spaces. We need to question how decision-making power is distributed. We need to ask ourselves whether we dismiss survivor voices because their emotions make us uncomfortable and whether we label them as "angry" or "too emotional" when, in reality, they are simply impassioned.

Survivor engagement is not just about bringing more survivors into the conversation. It's about making sure they are leading that conversation and are heard and valued.

And to do that, we must first be willing to confront the biases—and the privileges—that have kept them out.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS



"SETTA gave us an opportunity to work with professionals who are doing this work every day, and allowed our sector to coalesce and become more unified."

Anastasia Lynge, MSW

The SETTA project was an invaluable opportunity to offer a survivor-led and survivor-informed perspective to organizations doing direct work with those impacted by trafficking. SETTA gave us an opportunity to work with professionals doing this work every day, and allowed our sector to coalesce and become more unified. We all have a stake in the fight against human trafficking. Together, we learned about the roles we have to play, what we have to contribute, and what keeps us in this work. We saw the barriers that survivors face, whether in direct services or during their employment, and the opportunities to support survivors more holistically and long term. We reflected on the importance of care and community in keeping us in this work. We created future leadership opportunities for survivors, creating space in our sector for those with lived experience to continue shaping advocacy, service delivery, and professional opportunity.

OVC must continue to reflect on the lessons from SETTA and initiate steps to build on the lessons learned from this work. Human trafficking is an issue that we must all fight against; it's not something just one of us can solve. It's certainly not something that survivors can solve alone. What can it take to end trafficking? We have the power to end exploitation, and many direct service providers feel the same way. But to do that, we have to keep lived experience at the center, and stay connected. Above all, we can never stop learning together.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

A photograph of a sunset over a field of wildflowers. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the landscape. The field is filled with various wildflowers, including yellow and purple ones. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue.

"Prior to SETTA, in spite of an MA degree [Master of Arts] and extensive grassroots leadership, I couldn't seem to find a seat at the table or a voice within the anti-trafficking sector."

SETTA Consultant

My experience with SETTA is relatively recent, as I interviewed and onboarded in late 2024 and early 2025. That said, I had been interested in SETTA and survivor engagement for a long time. Before SETTA, despite having an MA degree and extensive grassroots leadership, I couldn't seem to find a seat at the table or a voice within the anti-trafficking sector. For years, I provided direct services due to my lived experiences. Yet, as the only employee hired for my lived experiences, I was offered no real voice and no direct connection with organizational leadership. I felt siloed, as though my lived and professional experience were not valued. SETTA offered me a place where survivors' lived and professional experiences were both valued and paid forward, so as not to repeat the same mistakes that often go unchecked or unnoticed within anti-trafficking organizations and movements. In a few months working on this project with OVC grantees, I witnessed the value of my input, as well as the great work that organizations are doing to ensure survivors are not re-exploited. This project should be renewed or continued, so that survivor engagement can continue to make invaluable improvements across the anti-trafficking sector.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS



"This is a powerful synergy that SETTA has provided for me as a consultant, creating a professional, peer supportive and engaging process that has both challenged and encouraged me."

Fenix McClay

SETTA is a beautiful peer-to-peer space for providers and survivors to discuss topics current and important to anti-human trafficking work. Though all grantees came from different backgrounds and experiences, it is a valuable space to learn and grow together, even in uncomfortable or challenging discussions.

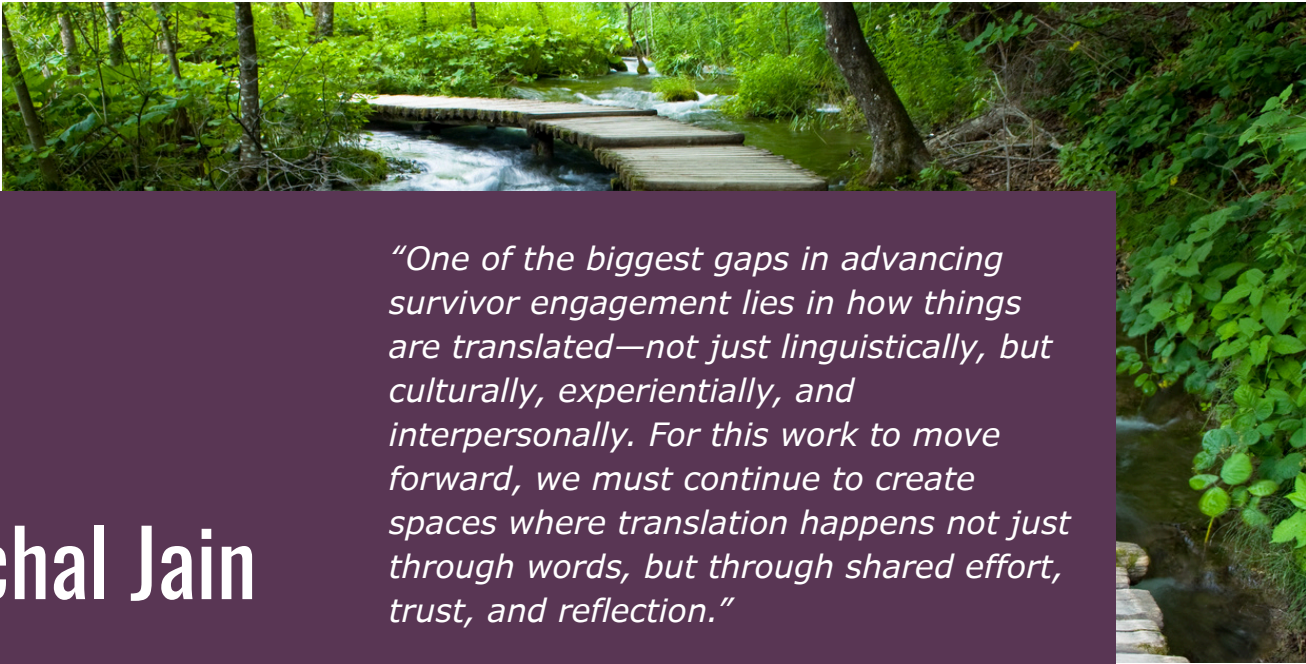
My TTA in this space allowed me to share my expertise and experience with service providers—offering insights while also listening to their needs, understandings, and questions. This synergy with SETTA fostered a professional, peer-supportive, and engaging process that has both challenged and encouraged me.

I encourage OVC to continue projects like SETTA, to create spaces for survivor consultants to provide necessary TA support to organizations, enabling us to work together and not be siloed in our areas. The collaboration is invaluable and much needed to create trauma-informed services for survivors. Without the engagement of lived experience experts, there is no way to accurately measure the effectiveness of the work being done to prevent this crime and provide supportive and applicable services.

As an individual, it is easy to stay rooted in my own experiences and expertise, which can lead to limited perspective and bias. But in this space, I could provide education that led to thoughtful discussion and participation in conversations, resulting in a greater understanding of others' experiences and needs as service providers.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

SETTA fostered conversations that supported my thoughtful reflection and expanded my perspectives. The topics presented by SETTA were both timely, applicable, and practical. What was most impactful about participating as a consultant was the honest discussions on survivor engagement, which enhanced my connection with others in the field and is a space I looked forward to entering every month. SETTA created a community, making it accessible for lived experience and service providers to work through topics that impact the work being done daily.



Anchal Jain

"One of the biggest gaps in advancing survivor engagement lies in how things are translated—not just linguistically, but culturally, experientially, and interpersonally. For this work to move forward, we must continue to create spaces where translation happens not just through words, but through shared effort, trust, and reflection."

As a first-time TTA, I focused on building trust with the grantee. Through this experience, I learned that trust is not a single, uniform concept—it takes many forms. To build trust effectively and support project success, it must be approached considering the grantee's perspective.

I had to listen to the grantee, understand perspectives, and take time to understand challenges, values, and definitions of success. Only after aligning with the grantee's vision and demonstrating that my role was to support, not disrupt, the journey, I gently suggested exploring alternate approaches to reach shared goals. This required delicate communication. When a grantee feels that their current way is working, offering a different path can feel like a risk. At this stage, both learning and unlearning were required—on both sides.

Each meeting became a process of co-creating understanding, always coming back to the shared intention: the well-being and empowerment of the communities we serve.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

Trust-building didn't stop once rapport was established; it deepened as the grantee began to see that transformation was a mutual effort. We acknowledged when we hit limitations, and when that happened, we stayed open and leaned on peers with lived experience. That support was critical—because some aspects of survivor-informed TTA simply cannot be taught; they must be felt and understood from lived reality.

Over time, I've come to understand that social power is not leadership. Leadership—true, transformational leadership—is about alignment, not authority. It's not just about guiding someone forward, but about creating the conditions where forward movement feels safe, shared, and self-directed. That means focusing first on psychological and physical safety, then building shared understanding, and finally clarifying goals that feel right, not imposed. This is where real transformation happens. Yet, many of our systems still default to transactional leadership—driven by deliverables, timelines, and roles—without pausing to ask whether alignment is even present. Without that pause, we risk replicating harm in spaces meant to foster healing.

One of the most critical learnings from this project is the need for a clear scope of work—not as a limiting document, but as a container that helps protect everyone involved. In nonprofit settings, especially survivor-serving organizations, invisible cultures of exploitation can emerge under the banner of “mission-driven” work. Without boundaries, good intentions can lead to burnout, blurred roles, and even re-traumatization. Having clarity, supported by peer mentorship, became essential—not only for the grantee, but for me. Healthy boundaries are not just professional; they are relational. When relationship boundaries are clear and respectful, money and time management boundaries tend to follow.

This project also reminded me that power dynamics are always present—whether acknowledged or not. Ignoring them doesn't neutralize them. We have to name them, examine them, and actively work to find balance within them. Power doesn't have to dominate; it can be held with humility. But that takes practice—and risk. We all come into this work as human beings first, and that means we need to build our risk-taking capacity just as much as our technical skills.

As I continue to reflect, I realize that evolving requires new responses. The ways we've always done things may have served a purpose at one time, but they cannot carry us into the future of survivor-engaged work. We have to be willing to change—not just strategies, but ways of being. Survivor engagement is not a checklist—it is a dynamic practice of trust, humility, and reflection.

Now, as we look to the future, the trust that has been built must continue to be nurtured and expanded across different departments and levels within the organizations.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

Grantees need to feel confident that seeking support from TTAs across a range of challenges is not a threat to the structure they've worked hard to build, but rather a way to strengthen and stabilize it. This is essential to fostering true survivor engagement—where the relationship between grantees and TTAs is one of shared vision, mutual growth, and authentic partnership.

One of the biggest gaps in advancing survivor engagement lies in how things are translated—not just linguistically, but culturally, experientially, and interpersonally. For this work to move forward, we must continue to create spaces where translation happens not just through words, but through shared effort, trust, and collective reflection.

This first TTA experience has been a powerful reminder that impact begins with presence, not perfection—with meeting people where they are, and walking alongside them, not ahead.



Norma Bastidas

"By combining our efforts, we significantly improved the quality of care provided to the communities we are dedicated to serving."

The most significant lesson learned as a SETTA consultant was the value of collaboration between grantees and consultants with lived experience. This partnership enabled us to effectively evaluate existing and planned programs, and strategically direct resources to those with the greatest potential impact. By combining our efforts, we significantly improved the quality of care provided to the communities we serve.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS



SETTA Consultant

"Professionals (social workers) at each organization seemed to have difficulty telling survivors 'no,' and thereby set them up for unnecessary conflict, avoidable mistakes, and professional difficulties. Likewise, these professionals had a hard time approaching me as a colleague, a fellow social worker, and as someone with lived experience."

I came to anti-trafficking work from the sex workers' rights movement, which is entirely led by sex workers. Just like other worker-organized movements and movements against other forms of gender-based violence, such as domestic and sexual violence, those most impacted are also those taking on leadership roles. So, it was immediately notable how top-down the anti-trafficking sector is, which was sadly unsurprising given the (almost exclusively unpleasant) interactions I'd had with anti-trafficking organizations as a self-identified sex worker first and a survivor second. I only began considering anti-trafficking work once I recognized its potential to close the massive funding gap for sex worker rights, and at the encouragement of other (former) sex workers/survivors who had been working to make the anti-trafficking space a safer one for those of us whose experiences span the spectrum of choice, circumstance, and coercion.

I understand SETTA as an extension of this work to make the anti-trafficking movement safer for survivors with diverse experiences and identities. It is also an opportunity for survivors to hone the incredibly valuable knowledge and skills gained through unpaid organizing and turn them into a monetizable service. It's heartening that anti-trafficking organizations are now acknowledging their limitations and seeking to improve employment opportunities for survivors in the sector. It's also evident that many organizations struggle with what this entails in a practical sense.

Creating opportunities for more meaningful survivor engagement requires deep self-reflection, difficult conversations, a willingness to move without urgency, and significant power-sharing.

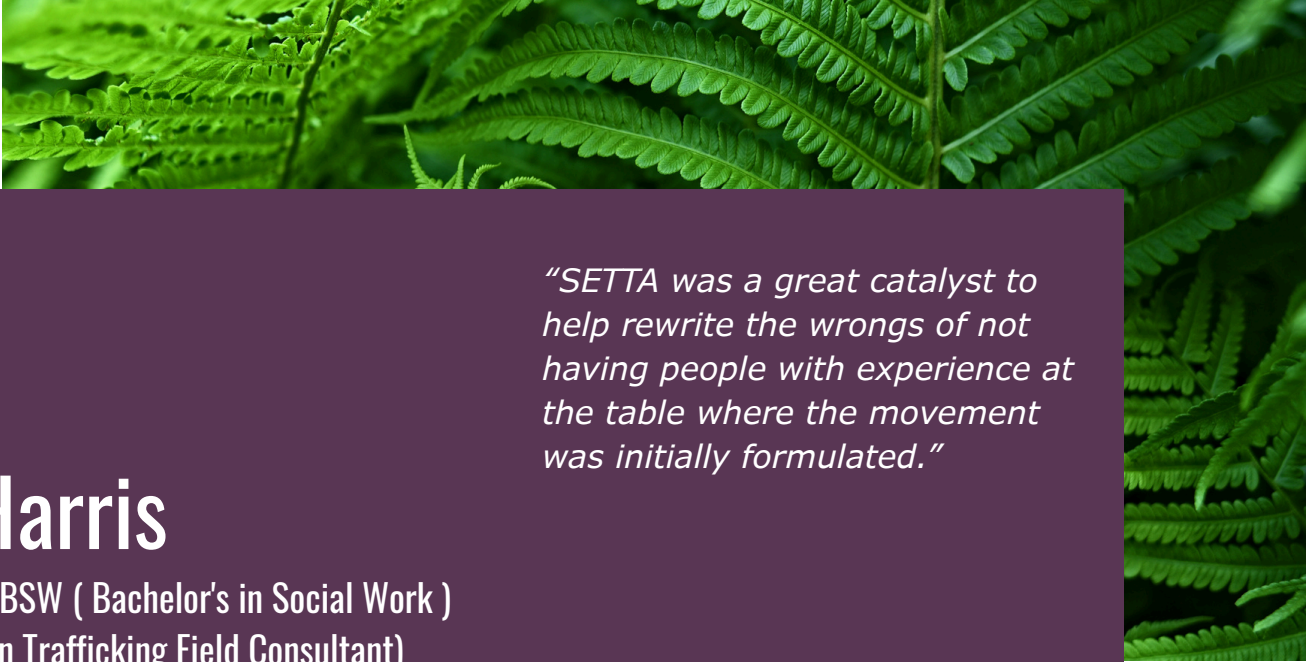
SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

The anti-trafficking sector and the nonprofit industrial complex as a whole do not encourage any of these behaviors. White supremacist cultural norms reward conflict avoidance, moving fast and breaking things, and creating hierarchies of professionalism that place workers with graduate degrees above peer workers. It's difficult to break through these patterns reinforced by entire systems in small, biweekly meetings.

In both of my SETTA consultancies, the organizations involved believed themselves to be far readier for collaborative levels of survivor engagement than their written policies or their actions indicated. They were both so ready, in fact, that they skipped ahead of preparatory work, neglecting to create clear expectations or provide training and professional development to survivors. Professionals (social workers) at each organization seemed to have difficulty telling survivors "no," and thereby set them up for unnecessary conflict, avoidable mistakes, and professional difficulties. Likewise, these professionals had a hard time approaching me as a colleague, a fellow social worker, and as someone with lived experience. Having only encountered survivors in moments of crisis and as clients, they clearly had difficulty expanding their understanding of what survivorship could look like. This created challenges for me, which in turn made it difficult for me to navigate my own emotions while continuing to present professionally and engage constructively.

Support from SETTA staff was critical in helping me continue these working relationships in productive ways. I deeply appreciate the professional development this project afforded me—it both affirmed my existing skills and helped me gain new ones. It's difficult for me to assess how successful either of my consultancies proved to be for the organizations themselves. It may be that both require more comprehensive support that is beyond the scope of SETTA. However, I believe it was a tremendous opportunity for me, and I believe it has enormous potential should it be resurrected in the future. I sincerely hope there will continue to be funding opportunities for survivor-led TTA.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS



"SETTA was a great catalyst to help rewrite the wrongs of not having people with experience at the table where the movement was initially formulated."

Eric Harris

Eric A Harris BSW (Bachelor's in Social Work)
HTFC (Human Trafficking Field Consultant)

SETTA was a unique experience for me. As a consultant for over the past 14 years, I've seen a lot of growth when it comes to living and experiencing collaboration with allies. Often, we are sent into TTA and placed in situations where we sink or swim with little guidance, lack proper safeguards, and do not have cohesive TTA.

What I found very unique about SETTA is that, for once, we were not placed into a sink-or-swim situation. We had contact points that were willing to help or guide us through our discussion with OVC grantees. Another thing I found refreshing about this program is that our reports were sent to OVC. Therefore, OVC could understand the perspectives of people with lived experience, who are truly the best people to assess OVC's programs and make them more inclusive for the populations they serve, allowing for meaningful engagement with people with lived experience and their allies.

During my time with SETTA, I was given two projects that had their own unique, diverse challenges. I was more than willing to step up to the occasion. This program was a catalyst for teaching moments and helped allies unlearn the harmful ways they had impacted the community without realizing it.

For one of my projects, I was tasked to help set up a speakers' bureau. It was a great segue into looking into a community partner and evaluating them without judgment on my part.

Often, the conversations were very receptive, but they were also very impactful and helped agencies achieve their goals upon signing up for SETTA.

SETTA CONSULTANT REFLECTIONS

We also discussed how the right time to enter the anti-trafficking field is when someone regains their life and decides to become a professional. My first talk was an excellent opportunity to have a great dialogue that the anti-trafficking movement usually does not allow space for—we discussed fair compensation for someone with lived experience. The anti-trafficking movement was built by allies, typically by forming a symbiotic relationship with people with lived experience. There would not be an anti-trafficking movement without people of lived experience to help support the data points, research, and programming.

SETTA was a great catalyst to help address the lack of people with lived experience involved in the movement's initial formation. Secondly, it was a great way to be an equal with allies, knowing that they depend on consultants' knowledge, values, skills, and agency with their projects.

My second TA presented its own unique challenges. As a professional, I was eager to spotlight professionals with lived experience and the vital role they play in offering specialized TA to OVC grantees. It set up systems to evaluate and ensure that grantees know their community partners and the populations they serve; assess these partnerships; and (3) examine their partners' policies and procedures, outreach, and programming. Both of my TA experiences gave me the opportunity to reinforce why people with lived experience are professionals and deserve to help guide nongovernmental organizations with the proper interventions and best practices in the anti-trafficking field to avoid harming the populations they serve.

CLOSING

The SETTA project has provided a structured approach to advancing survivor engagement in the OVC-funded anti-trafficking field. By prioritizing trust-building, inclusive practices, and the integration of lived experience, the project has demonstrated effective strategies for shifting traditional power dynamics and improving program outcomes.

Key findings from the project highlight that survivor leadership contributes to more responsive, ethical, and effective systems. Conversely, the marginalization or tokenization of survivor voices has been shown to perpetuate harm and limit progress. These observations emphasize the importance of embedding survivor engagement and leadership as a standard practice rather than an occasional initiative.

Organizations, funders, and practitioners are encouraged to assess their current frameworks, policies, and decision-making processes. This includes investing in survivor-led efforts, fostering environments that support open dialogue and continuous learning, and maintaining accountability to those directly impacted by anti-trafficking work.

This paper reflects on many themes and practices to support systemic change. Continued implementation and adaptation of these practices across the field is essential to sustaining progress and ensuring that survivor engagement and leadership remain central to anti-trafficking efforts.

DEDICATION

To all the survivors who are no longer with us—

Your voices, your truths, and your visions for a better future continue to guide this work. Though you are not physically with us, your presence is felt in every step we take toward justice, healing, and change.

We carry your hopes with us. We honor your courage.

And we remain committed to building the future you dreamed of.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to extend our gratitude to OVC for its unwavering support and commitment to the SETTA project. OVC's dedication to advancing the cause of survivors of trafficking has been instrumental in our journey.

We also thank the OVC-funded human trafficking grantees who participated in SETTA. Your active involvement, insights, and collaboration have been invaluable in shaping the project's direction and outcomes. Your contributions have significantly enriched our collective understanding and approach to survivor engagement.

Thank you to all of the consultants who lent their expertise and time to advancing meaningful survivor engagement within the SETTA project in so many ways. Your guidance, knowledge, and dedication have been crucial in fostering an environment of learning and innovation within the SETTA community.

A special thank you to everyone at Survivor Alliance and the National Survivor Network, ICF's partners in this project. Your brilliance, years of survivor leadership, and stewardship guided this project every step of the way. Your vision and lived expertise were foundational to SETTA's success, and we are deeply honored to have walked this path with you.

Together, you have all made the SETTA community a space of incredible learning and innovation, significantly improving OVC-funded human trafficking programs. Your efforts have paved the way for more effective and compassionate support for survivors, and for that, we are deeply grateful.

Resources for Survivor Engagement

TOOLKITS, RESEARCH, AND RESOURCES REFERENCED BY SETTA VERSION 2.0

Introduction

This document compiles the external links and resources referenced in the Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance (SETTA) monthly newsletters, training and technical assistance projects, and the Food for Thought and Communities of Practice sessions. The resources have been organized by topic to help readers easily access tools, reports, training opportunities, and research that support survivor-centered practices. Each entry includes a brief description to provide context and help users quickly identify relevant materials for their work. This list is intended to serve as a practical reference, not an exhaustive list, for professionals seeking to deepen their engagement with survivor-informed strategies and strengthen their organizational practices.

Topics include:

- Survivor engagement fundamentals and leadership resources
- Research, evaluation, and knowledge systems
- Organizational capacity, cohesiveness, and sustainability
- Reports and publications
- SETTA newsletters and the webinar archive

Survivor Engagement Fundamentals and Leadership Resources

These resources focus on best practices for involving survivors, practicing ethical storytelling, and fostering survivor-led initiatives.

- **National Survivor Network:**
 - [*Meaningful Engagement of People With Lived Experience*](#). This toolkit is used throughout SETTA projects and provides a framework for fostering meaningful survivor engagement and inclusion in decision-making within the anti-trafficking sector.
 - [*Resource Directory*](#). This webpage includes a searchable catalog of resources for survivor engagement.
 - [*Survivor Storytelling Resources*](#) (webpage and workbook). This page/workbook provides practical guidance and considerations for survivors who wish to explore their boundaries regarding public storytelling; learn how to leverage their stories for impactful advocacy; and craft a compelling, survivor-developed story suitable for each audience.
- **Survivor Alliance:**
 - [*Allies Overview*](#). This webpage provides foundational information, resources, and training on survivor inclusion, including the Allies Training: Nuts and Bolts of Survivor Engagement.
 - [*Survivor Leadership Resources*](#). This webpage features resources created by members and survivor leaders on skill-building, networking, and education.
 - [*Survivor Engagement Resources*](#). This webpage includes resources for creating ground rules, fundamentals for compensation, creating survivor-informed spaces, tips for anti-trafficking professionals when working with survivor leaders, a toolkit for building survivor-informed organizations, survivor-written articles, and trauma-informed practices.

- **TES Team:** [SME With Lived Experience Consulting Training](#). This training aims to provide information to individuals with lived experience who are considering becoming a subject matter expert (SME).
- **Ethical Storytelling:** [Resources](#). This webpage offers resources for ethical storytelling in nonprofits, including Ethical Storytelling 101, how-to guides, and podcasts.

Research, Evaluation, and Knowledge Systems

These resources focus on participatory research methods, integrating lived experience into research, and understanding the types of knowledge systems.

- **Cambridge Prisms Global Mental Health:** [“Mental Health and Lived Experience: The Value of Lived Experience Expertise in Global Mental Health”](#) (article)
- **International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research:** [Evaluation of Participatory Health Research](#) (webpage)
- **Urban Institute:** [Community-Engaged and Participatory Methods Toolkits](#) (webpage)
- **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation:** [Methods and Emerging Strategies to Engage People With Lived Experience](#) (brief)
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization:** [Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems](#) (webpage)
- **Oxford Brookes University:** [Career Paths in Research](#) (webpage)

Organizational Capacity, Cohesiveness, and Sustainability

These resources are aimed at strengthening organizational effectiveness, promoting collective well-being, and ensuring long-term sustainability in anti-trafficking efforts.

- **Freedom Network USA:** [Capacity Building](#). This webpage offers a short video series, as well as workbooks and toolkits for survivors and new advocates starting their journey in the anti-trafficking field.
- **National Survivor Network:**
 - [“Collective Power and Collective Action.”](#) This article emphasizes the transformative power of community organizing in the fight against trafficking, noting that 75% of survivors feel more empowered when part of a collective effort.
 - [Focusing on a Sustainable Foundation](#). This report highlights basic principles for sustaining survivor engagement.
 - [Care, Self-Determination, and Safety](#). This report focuses on community-centered public health approaches to preventing trafficking.
- **Sanar Institute:** [Thrive Education and Training](#). Sanar's Training and Education program provides resources and toolkits for organizations looking to establish or enhance trauma-informed workplaces and initiatives.
- **Safety Net Project:** [Confidentiality Toolkit](#). Survivor privacy is crucial to safety, and this toolkit includes informational webinars, toolkits, and templates for privacy documentation to support service providers.

Reports and Publications

- **Survivor Alliance:** [Publications](#). This webpage includes copies of Survivor Alliance's open-access publications, including the *2024 World Congress Report, Exploring Lived Experience in Anti-Trafficking Conferences, Empowering Survivor-Led Advocacy*, and many more.
- **National Survivor Network:** [News and Updates](#). This webpage includes recent and historical report releases, news, and publications from the National Survivor Network.
- **U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking:** [Reports](#). This webpage includes information on the Council, as well as online versions of all of its published reports.
- **Journal of Human Trafficking:** [“Awareness Without Re-Exploitation: Empowering Approaches to Sharing the Message About Human Trafficking.”](#) This journal article is highlighted for its relevance to ethical storytelling.

SETTA Archive

Newsletters

This section includes links to all of the SETTA newsletters, which began publication in January 2025. Each edition features news, resources, and articles written by consultants on the SETTA project.

- [January Newsletter](#)
- [February Newsletter](#)
- [March Newsletter](#)
- [April Newsletter](#)
- [May Newsletter](#)
- [June Newsletter](#)
- [July Newsletter](#)
- [August Newsletter](#)
- [September Newsletter](#)

Recorded Communities of Practice and Food-for-Thought Sessions

This section includes links to the recorded SETTA Communities of Practice and Food-for-Thought sessions, as well as the accompanying PowerPoint slides and handbooks when available.

- [Building Bridges: SETTA's Journey in Learning and Unlearning Panel Discussion](#) (PowerPoint slides and webinar recording; June 2025)
- [Food for Thought: Learning and Unlearning in High-Pressure Seasons](#) (webinar recording; November 2024)
- [Accessibility Practices Communities of Practice Session](#) (PowerPoint slides and webinar recording; September 2024)
- [Creating and Maintaining an Advisory Board Communities of Practice](#) (PowerPoint slides, handbook, and webinar recording; June 2024)
- [Implementing Effective Practices in Hiring and Onboarding Communities of Practice](#) (PowerPoint, handbook, and webinar recording; February 2024)



Connect With Our Partners!



SETTA Case Example: Pivoting for Capacity and Fulfilling Our Commitment to Relationships

Uncovering the heart of Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance Ask:

Implement and evaluate a survivor feedback survey created in the first SETTA technical assistance project.

Participant Reflection

"We are grateful for our partnership with the SETTA team. Despite our team's issues with capacity, the SETTA team was willing to continue working with us and support us through our commitment to survivor engagement."

Consultant Reflection

"When the grantee thought our TA needed to end, we saw and felt their disappointment. We had spent months with them, so we deeply understood how important this work was to them and how limited their capacity was. So we said, 'We've got this! Let's table the big project and tackle what's in front of you now.'"



RELATIONSHIP FIRST



The grantee has been committed to and passionate about survivor engagement from the beginning. At SETTA, we listened to their wishes for survivor engagement in their agency, heard the barriers, held space for the tension, and emphasized that relationships are our priority.

THOUGHTFULNESS BEFORE PROCESS



Facing unexpected staff changes, the grantee felt that they could no longer continue their survivor engagement project with SETTA. We slowed down, normalized their experience, and got creative. The technical assistance (TA) pivoted to creating and including survivor engagement questions within their hiring interviews.



Relationship



Thoughtfulness



Intentionality

OUTCOMES



Bridging Survivor Engagement

1

The SETTA consultant created an intentional and relationship-focused collaboration that normalized slowing down processes, building trust and mutuality, and allowing the path to survivor engagement to be tangible for the grantee.

Building Lasting Relationships

2

Because we held space for change, we created space for sustainability. We continue to be invested in the relationship built with the grantee beyond the scope of deliverables.

Meaningful Survivor Engagement

3

The co-developed interview questions have resulted in, for the first time, recruiting people with experience in and commitment to survivor engagement. This TA created a meaningful engagement pathway through team alignment.

SETTA Case Example: Healing Communication to Foster Meaningful Survivor Engagement.

Uncovering the heart of Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance Ask:

Develop a survivor advisory board.

Consultant Reflection:

"It was so refreshing to be able to name the unspoken issue. If we can't communicate with each other, which includes disagreement, we can't meaningfully engage."

Participant Reflection:

*"Working with the SETTA project has proven to be incredibly rewarding in more ways than one. From the thoughtfulness of navigating power dynamics within survivor engagement to fostering an open and safe space for effective discussion, this project has truly built **meaningful relationships and made a significant impact**. SETTA has been a vital and much-needed resource for all grantees, offering invaluable support and guidance. The collaborative atmosphere and the genuine connections formed have been instrumental in achieving our goals and making a difference. I look forward to seeing the ongoing positive impact the SETTA team will continue to make!"*

RELATIONSHIP FIRST



The Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance's (SETTA) collaboration with the grantee focused on prioritizing relationships over deliverables. This approach allowed the grantee to express their uncertainty about handling disagreements with individuals with lived experience, which was a barrier to forming an advisory board.

THOUGHTFULNESS BEFORE PROCESS



SETTA thoughtfully slowed down the process of creating a survivor advisory board to focus on integrating trauma-informed communication and conflict resolution. This approach aimed to support the future board and the agency's existing staff and processes.



Relationship



Thoughtfulness



Intentionality

OUTCOMES



Bridging Survivor Engagement

1

The grantee openly shared insecurities and fears about survivor engagement. The survivor consultant also shared their perspective on the challenges of engaging with agencies that resist healthy disagreement and dialogue.

Building Lasting Relationships

2

SETTA's approach built lasting relationships and mutuality by fostering trust through open communication, healthy dialogue, and collaborative solutions.

Meaningful Survivor Engagement

3

Integrating conflict resolution skills, trauma-informed communication, and addressing communication barriers enhances grantees' ability to work professionally with survivor consultants. This approach ensures clear, accessible communication, leading to more effective collaboration and meaningful engagement.

SETTA Case Example: Sustainable Collaboration, A Universal Need

Uncovering the heart of Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance

Grantee TTA Ask:

Originally the grantee asked for SETTA support to assist with informing the organization on how to hire and compensate those with lived experience

Unlearning

"What was most helpful about SETTA was learning to treat individuals with lived experience as the same as everyone, with respect and dignity, and not focusing on their stories"

Consultant Reflection

"The partner organization was receptive to SE and excited to work with SETTA. This was a positive experience overall and I am excited to watch this program grow".



RELATIONSHIP FIRST



Through trust, accountability, and leaning into the work, the grantee was able to identify that in order to move into survivor engagement well, they needed to slow down and ensure a collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable space for all members.

THOUGHTFULNESS BEFORE PROCESS



The grantee identified that conflict resolution was an area where capacity building was needed first. Through this process, they paved the path forward to a trauma-informed environment for all members that supports survivor engagement.



Relationship



Thoughtfulness



Intentionality

OUTCOMES



1

Bridging Survivor Engagement

SETTA modeled that creating spaces conducive to meaningful engagement means creating trauma informed spaces for everyone.

2

Building Lasting Relationships

The grantee was able to co-create, with the SETTA consultant, a set of community agreements and a grievance policy that ensures the sustainability of relationships within the program.

3

Meaningful Survivor Engagement

As a result of the TTA provided, the grantee shared that they felt strongly they could now recognize how factors like personal attitudes, power/privilege, beliefs and experiences impact how they engage with survivors of trafficking.